

# THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 152

FEBRUARY, 1934.

Price 4d.



## Topics of the Month

IN county constituencies at any rate, the County Council Elections are the predominant topic of the month. Not that we are satisfied by a long way that sufficient candidates have been put in the field, but the constituencies are awakening, and in some places it appears likely that the fight will be waged with a vigour worthy of the occasion. We repeat once more — it will be three more years before the opportunity comes again!

But the County Council Elections must not be allowed to overshadow too completely the District Council Elections. Candidates are more easily found in these elections, particularly in the urban areas, and we are hoping for another marked advance in Labour representation. It is perfectly true that the Urban and Rural Councils are far less important from an administrative point of view than the County Councils, but the powers of these bodies, though diminished, vary considerably and all are important. The capture of more District Councils is an urgent and necessary step in Labour's advance. These elections, too, are admirable in their way for keeping Labour machinery bright; they afford opportunities for propaganda and they keep together our Movement in the more scattered areas.

Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad! And so the "Daily Express" — that champion of lost causes — has launched a campaign against the Co-operative Movement. So much the better for the friends of co-operation. So much the better for a closer alliance between the kindred movements of Socialism, Trades Unionism and Co-operation. Co-operators will discover once again who are their friends. What a list could be made of Beaverbrook's and

Rothermere's fizzled and forgotten stunts, if, for a punishment, some poor devil could be given the job of wading through the dead files of these brazen trumpeters. Rothermere espouses Fascism and runs his head in a noose; Beaverbrook attacks Co-operation and runs his head against a stone wall. The cheek of these charlatans is at last becoming apparent to the British public. Dropping circulations tell the tale.

But neither Beaverbrook nor Rothermere must be taken too cheaply, particularly with a House of Commons as at present constituted. That MacDonald is a Co-operator doesn't matter much. He is also a jelly fish and as spineless as they are made. What must be borne in mind is that these two papers combined have a circulation exceeding that of the "Daily Herald," and that the British public after all contains an excess of fools. As we have pointed out before, they may not be so numerous as Carlyle thought, but there is still a lot of them. Always one observes, following a newspaper stunt of this sort, its influence upon soft-headed people in various walks of life. Local Chambers of Commerce, largely composed of persons who cannot see the wood for trees, have already taken up the cry. Funny too that local shopkeepers cannot see that a far bigger threat to their interests comes from the multiple shops, whose advertisements provide the Press Lords with their advertisements and funds. My Lord Beaverbrook takes good care to keep on the right side of the big firms who crush out the small dealer, while at the same time deluding the little shopkeeper into the belief that he is fighting their battle. Well we might think them fools. But Labour has a lot to do yet by way of carrying its message and its policies into grades of society not yet attracted to its cause. Small shopkeepers must come

in; and above all we must not be on the defensive in these matters and wait for the Press Lords to attack us before we go for them.

Though it is still mid-February and ample time remains for both snow and ice, it is by no means too early to be looking forward to summer propaganda. Country lore predicts again a good summer this year for "the birds are nesting high." However that may be, could we have anticipated this time last year the sort of summer which we did have, undoubtedly better use would have been made of it for propaganda purposes. A succession of wet summers had somewhat tempered enthusiasm for fetes and galas, but we hope this year that Local Parties and Federations will lend their energies to organising some really big summer functions. They have an excellent effect on the general population, and indeed, it is hoped, that the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign will be punctuated by big outdoor demonstrations up and down the country. Then there is May Day to look forward to. Speakers should be booked now, and May Day Committees elected. Spectacular effects attained in some centres have always had a wonderful propaganda value apart from the speeches. But careful preparation is necessary — long and detailed preparation.

And loud speakers are, we believe, going to be a feature in the successful events of this summer. These facilities (advertised in our columns) will relieve the strain on speakers, add attraction to the meetings, and enable the speeches to be heard by great concourses of people. There is another use to which loud speakers can be put, and for this lesson we have to thank the Bedford Division where the candidate and speakers tour the Division travelling slowly and give a simple running address into the microphone. Gramophone records are used to attract crowds where it is intended to stop and hold a meeting. There are few divisions in which one or other of these ways of using the loud speaker would not be a vast improvement on present methods. And the initial cost should not be a bar when one remembers the results obtained. Imagine the effect of a couple of hundred loud speakers owned by Local Parties operating

throughout the country. This is a practical possibility this summer, if Socialists show the enterprise which will be needed if we are to convert the electorate. My, what a summer!

Some encouraging reports are reaching us regarding the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign from constituencies where the acceptance of the plan means an exceptional sacrifice and reflects great honour on the Party. For instance, the far-flung Melton Mowbray Division, which contains some of the historic hunting centres of the country, is to take up the matter in real earnest. Circulars have already gone out to all supporters and an appeal has also been made for funds to carry on the campaign. In several constituencies the first issue of leaflets is to be combined with the distribution of a local circular outlining the purposes of the scheme, and appealing for funds, membership and workers. In some places special conferences have been held, as at Stockport and Birmingham, for announcing the objects of the scheme, and in others special Campaign Committees have been elected to work out and carry through the details of the scheme. It will interest our readers to know that in one constituency, at least, the Local Party guarantee is not for 35s. per month, but for a sufficient number of leaflets to cover the division; we imagine the total cost will considerably exceed the standard figure. At the same time, it has to be confessed that a majority of Divisional Parties have yet to send in to Head Office their promises of co-operation in the campaign.

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## Free Schoolrooms for Local Government Candidates

On and after June 1st, Local Government Candidates, i.e., candidates for County Councils, Borough Councils, District Councils and Parish Councils will be entitled to the free use of public elementary schools for the purposes of meetings in the same way as at a Parliamentary Election.

This is the effect of a provision of the Local Government Act, 1933, which comes into force on 1st June. The Act does not apply to Metropolitan Borough Councils, or to Scotland.

Our readers will note the ambiguity of the phrasing of Sub-Section 2 of the Section of the Act which we give below. We conceive the meaning to be that expenses will still be chargeable, though the wording of the Sub-Section leaves much to be desired. Fortunately, there is an appeal under this Act to the Board of Education—a provision which does not exist in the case of use at Parliamentary Elections. Section 69 of the Act reads as follows:—

69—(1) A candidate at an election of a county councillor, councillor of a borough, district councillor, or parish councillor, shall be entitled, for the purpose of holding public meetings in furtherance of his candidature, to the use, without payment, and at all reasonable times, during the period commencing on the day on which notice of the election is given and ending on the day preceding the day of election, and after reasonable notice, of a suitable room in the schoolhouse of any public elementary school situate in a parish wholly or in part comprised in the electoral area in which he is a candidate:

Provided that nothing in this section shall authorise the use of a room used as part of a private dwelling-house, nor authorise any interference with the hours during which the schoolhouse is used for educational purposes.

(2) If by reason of the use of a room under this section any expense is incurred by the persons having control over the room, or any damage is done to the schoolhouse, or to the furniture, fittings or appa-

tus therein, the expense or cost of making good such damage shall be defrayed by the person by whom, or on whose behalf, the meeting was convened.

(3) Any question arising under this section as to what is reasonable or suitable shall be determined by the Board of Education.

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## Ammunition for the County Council Elections

### Labour Party Ammunition.

We have already drawn our readers' attention to the County Council Guide (1933/34 edition) published by the Labour Party, which is a thirty-five thousand word description of County Council powers in England and Wales—a symposium of facts and material for candidates and C.C. members, and for those who would be familiar with the intricacies of British Local Government.

Now follows "County Council Fighting Points," a handbook of facts for the County Council Elections published by the Labour Party at twopence, or in quantities at much reduced prices.

This is an admirable twenty-four page pamphlet which summarises information under the principal heads to which policy will be directed in the coming contests. Speakers in the elections should get this pamphlet and it is all important in the preparation of literature and election addresses.

The Labour Party has also issued a helpful batch of literature in connection with the elections which contains suggestions for election addresses and leaflets, propaganda points, and hints on the organisation of the campaign. Interested persons who have not yet secured copies of this literature should write to the Head Office for same, or consult the copy sent to their own Divisional Secretary. The hints on organisation are published in this issue, in slightly abridged form.

### Well Done, Glamorgan!

Just as Sheffield gave us for the Municipal Elections a magnificent vindication of how Labour could govern, so our friends of the Glamorgan Federation of Labour Parties have, in the nick of time, published a pamphlet which is a vindication of Labour's rule on the Glamorgan County Council—a story of its successful grappling with the huge and vital problems which concern County Councils.

"Judge For Yourself — a record of Labour rule on the Glamorgan County Council" is the title of the pamphlet now published. It is priced at twopence and is published by the Glamorgan Federation, whose Secre-

tary is Mr. P. Gwyn Hughes, of Bryn Tiron, The Parade, Ton Pentre, Rhondda.

Labour speakers would do well to get hold of this pamphlet for the sake of its many effective illustrations.

### And of Course—Well Done, Durham!

We expected that the Durham Federation of Divisional Labour Parties would be well to the fore in the County Council elections. And right well has Durham prepared.

By the way, the Durham Federation has been reorganised under Labour Party rules, and the old Federation has given place to an organisation strictly following the National model. Unchanged, however, is the Secretary who, we are glad to note, is still that energetic and efficient organiser, Mr. J. W. Foster, J.P., of Rosendale, Neville's Cross, Durham.

Now with the co-operation of Mr. T. Summerbell, who is well known to all our readers, the Durham Federation (colloquially known as the Durham Labour Party) have come along with no fewer than eleven fighting leaflets, a draft election address, and other ammunition for the fight.

We advise our readers to send to Mr. Summerbell for a sample of the election address and price of same. The address is effectively illustrated on three pages—it is a four-page octavo—and the frontispiece contains a space for the candidate's photo. Durham Federation has put up a suggested programme for candidate's election address on the form before us.

Regarding the leaflets, necessarily the bulk of the matter is particular to Durham County, but we have discovered many points in them of general interest. However, if our readers send for samples of leaflets printed for local use they should send stamps as a contribution to cover cost.

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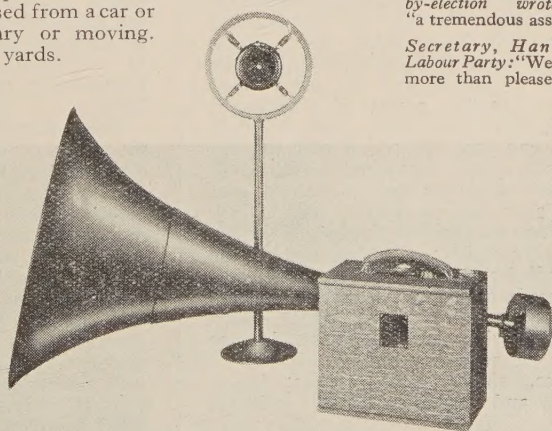
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# FROZEN ASSETS

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Who would have thought it? Not one in a hundred among Labour workers ever suspects that somewhere or another in the constituency there are Party assets which nobody knows about, and which somebody has clung tightly to for perhaps quite a long time.

Yet in our experience we have come across frozen assets, not once, but many times. Gold for the digging, and if one mentions to a County Secretary that little gold mines may be found somewhere in his constituency he suspects that one is quizzically referring to the possibilities of individual membership. Not at all.

The ups and downs of Labour organisation in some constituencies, particularly in County Divisions, have been phenomenal. In quite a number of constituencies Labour progress has not been continuous, but Parties have been formed and then they have collapsed, been reformed again and possibly collapsed again. Many people little suspect how many Parties have disappeared and reappeared in this way over a period of years, before solid growth has been established. And in how many cases have the assets of these little organisations remained in the hands of some officer of the defunct Party?

In our own experience when re-organising Parties or re-opening them, we have many times come across small cash balances—generally under a pound—and, in some other cases, tangible assets of a different kind.

In one case we found that the old secretary still treasured a stock of ladies' stockings and a baby's coat left over from a jumble sale, which was one of the last flutters of a little local committee! Membership had dwindled away through unemployment, removals and other causes.

But we have found bigger gains. A typewriter and duplicator in one case, in others stationery, cupboards, tables, chairs, books, maps, literature and smaller "finds" without end.

Let those who think ill of this matter remember, however, the difficulties and discouragements that are met with in small places. In not one

single case have we ever found difficulty in securing possession for the newly-established Party.

We spoke of digging for gold. Well, here we are. In one week recently we found two old balances of £2 14s. and £29 respectively, the latter sum being in the hands of trustees who are now handing over. The former sum was paid over at the meeting we attended.

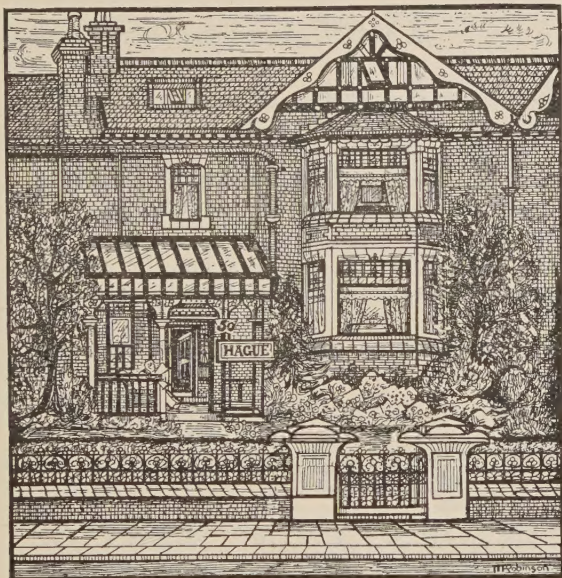
Is this a record? No, not in our experience; for in one case a Party had disbanded because of differences, now happily settled, and a sum of no less than £93 was frozen. That sum was invested (and earning interest) in the bank, in the names of the trustees. It took hard work, a National Executive decision and two or three years to get this position restored and to secure the control of this sum by a re-organised Party. And lest someone thinks that the result would be a rapid dissipation of these funds we can vouch for the fact that the funds have steadily increased and on 31st December, 1933, the bank balance in this case had reached £135.

But even this case can be equalled. There is a Party shortly to be revived, in an extraordinarily difficult constituency, where a piece of land, valued at least at £100, stands in the name of one or two old stalwarts, whose Party has succumbed to a series of misfortunes; but this solid asset remains as evidence of earlier ambitions.

These things may be very sad, but the story of Labour's misfortunes or disappointments is not so often told as its successes, and anyway, we mention these matters because there may be other opportunities of a like nature just waiting discovery or the revival of Socialist faith and activity.

There is, of course, another side to this picture. We have sometimes discovered debts, and in every case but one these liabilities have been manfully shouldered by the new Party. This is as it should be, for Labour's good name must be maintained, and, fortunately, the experience of the demise of a Party, leaving debts behind for others to shoulder, is comparatively rare.






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### BOOKS RECEIVED.

"The Case for Socialism." By Fred Henderson. Price one shilling. The Labour Party.

This book is the most complete and concise statement of the Socialist case that has ever been published. It has been entirely revised and brought up to date by the author, and should be in the hands of everyone interested in the propagation of the Socialist faith. As the preface says, "It is in recognition of this missionary responsibility . . . that the Labour Party launches this revised issue of one of the classics of our Movement upon a new career of missionary service."

Fred Henderson's case for Socialism is a ready seller. It returns a substantial profit to Literature Secretaries because twelve copies may be obtained for 8s. post free.

"Plan or No Plan." By Barbara Wootton. Price 5s. Victor Gollancz, Ltd.

"Planning" is a word which has

a vogue among Socialists at the present time. In a way it expresses the Socialist solution to capitalist chaos, and the art of planning is one of which much more will be heard, and of which much is to be learnt. Planning should accompany or precede promise; then follows performance. Barbara Wootton's contribution to this question and her explanation of the Russian planned economy, and her discussion of other planned economies is a contribution to Socialist thought from an angle hitherto somewhat neglected.

"Profits and Politics in the Post-War World." By R. D. Charques and A. H. Ewen. Price 5s. Victor Gollancz.

Though the Socialist student of history sees the economic urge behind many otherwise inexplicable or apparently adventitious happenings in history, it is really only in post-war years (leaving apart the history of modern Empires) that economic policy has become so in-



extricably and markedly mixed up in the plans and policies of politicians throughout the world. Indeed the politician, as politics were understood up to recent times, no longer exists; politicians are but tools and the driving force is money—except in so far as politicians express the economic revolution and people's control of industry and money, for which Socialism stands.

The gifted writers of this book strikingly and informatively review and expose the economic forces which are working in the various parties throughout the main countries of the world.

“Socialist Credit Policy.” By E. F. M. Durbin. Price one shilling. Issued by the New Fabian Research Bureau. Victor Gollancz.

Mr. Durbin's contribution is one for the close student of monetary questions. Incidentally the book contains a critical analysis of Major Douglas's proposals. But paper covered, this booklet is just twice the price for which it ought to be sold.

#### PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

“Hawkers of Death.” By Philip Noel Baker. Price twopence. The Labour Party.

Here is a pamphlet for ready and present sale by an author who knows what he is talking about. The pamphlet is authoritative and attractively got up, and should be sold at all meetings.

“The Tolpuddle Martyrs.” Price one penny. Trades Union Congress.

This is a really well got up pamphlet, which, in an interesting manner, outlines the steps that are to be taken to commemorate the epic story of Tolpuddle—incidentally the story is included. Quantity prices are 100 for 7s. 6d., 500 35s., post free.

“Socialist Foreign Policy,” with a preface by the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P. Price fourpence. The Anglo Russian Parliamentary Committee.

This pamphlet, which is a reprint of recent utterances by M. Stalin, M. Molotov (Chairman of the Coun-

cil of People's Commissaries) and M. Litvinov, is highly instructive as an evidence of the Soviet's aims in international affairs.

“The Working Class Movement and the Transition to Socialism.” By G. D. H. Cole. Price twopence. The Socialist League.

This pamphlet is No. 5 of the Forum Series, “Capitalism in Crisis.” Mr. Cole speaks truly when he says it is beyond doubt that the present technical development of industry is lessening the power of Trades Unionism in its present form. But then, we hope Trades Unionism is not standing still. Mr. Cole is characteristically critical of working class organisations; but, speaking of the Socialist League, while defending it warmly, he admits that there is the “danger that we may become a home for straying intellectuals like the Fabian Society, or for elderly and disillusioned T.U. officials like the S.D.F. . . . there are all sorts of “dangers.” Is there no other danger—Mr. Cole?

#### ALSO RECEIVED.

“A National Physiological Minimum.” By Dr. Somerville Hastings. Price twopence. The Fabian Society.

#### “RULES AND CONDUCT OF DEBATE.”

Our readers, we are sure, will be glad to be acquainted with a little manual on the “Rules and Conduct of Debate,” which is written simply and is such as to provide a useful guide to chairmen and others in the conduct of Party business. The little booklet with the above title which is advertised in this journal is just the thing for Labour officers. It is written by G. K. and T. E. Naylor. Mr. T. E. Naylor was, as our readers will remember, for many years chairman of the London Labour Party. This booklet is priced at 1s. 3d., but 12 copies may be purchased for 13s.

We hope our readers will be prompt with their orders for the booklet is now in its third edition, and editions are not inexhaustible. There are no matters likely to arise in the conduct of party or public meetings on which one does not get adequate guidance from the authors.



## QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE

### Printers' Liability.

*Question:* I am having a bit of a shindy with the printer over a serious mistake in some printing he has done for us. The printer claims that he sent me a proof, and that it was my fault that the mistake was not corrected, but I claim that it was his place to read my copy, and I should like to know if you have had any experience of the same sort of thing and how I stand about paying for the printing which is of no use to me. I have offered the printer that if he will do the job again I will meet him half-way.

*Answer:* Our friend omits to state whether or no any intimation was given by the printer, when submitting the proof, disclaiming responsibility for errors. The Master Printers' Federation have a clause in their standard contracts which reads as follows:—

"No responsibility will be accepted for errors in proof accepted by customer."

A slip or some intimation to this effect usually accompanies the proof.

It should be observed that notwithstanding the common use of the above intimation, the printer is not absolutely absolved from responsibility from any errors. He must use "reasonable care" in the execution of a customer's order, and, while the phrase quoted attempts to throw responsibility on the customer, proof of lack of care on the printer's part would throw the responsibility back upon him.

Difficulties of this kind are not uncommon, but if every case went to law the Courts would have little else to do than to define what was "reasonable care" in every case, for obviously circumstances differ widely.

Generally speaking, when a mistake has crept through, a little give and take on both sides is desirable. It is rarely that the whole of the printing is wasted as our correspondent alleges in his case, and sometimes the printer will overprint or use some other device to minimise the evil.

Even where the fault is plainly the customer's a printer can usually do the job again at far less than the original cost, and for the sake of business, and to retain a customer's regard, most printers would be prepared to meet a customer further even than would be reasonable. We suggest to our friend that he uses a little tact and persuasion.

### Where to get Maps.

*Question:* Ours is a long, straggling constituency, and I have no good map of same. I should be glad if you could advise me where I can get a good map, or if you can advise me as to the best way of mapping out the division myself, and getting the Urban and Rural districts marked up.

*Answer:* It is some time since we published an article on this question, but we note that an article appeared in our issue for June, 1921, one or two copies of which we have by us. Messrs. George Phillip and Son, of Fleet Street, London, would supply a good map to order. On the other hand, for ordinary use, our friend might procure as large a scale road map as he can and then enlist the good offices of the county officials to allow him to trace the boundaries on his map from their copies. In view of the many alterations of boundaries which have recently been made the maps now in use in most constituencies require revision. Many agents



we know have already revised their maps.

### Counter Amendments and Direct Negatives.

**Question:** I must apologise for again troubling you with a question about our Chairman. At our last meeting we had a lot of amendments moved, but mine was ruled out of order as a direct negative. At the same time the Chairman accepted other amendments, and put them to the vote, though they were direct negatives just as much as mine. Our Chairman is a bit of an autocrat, and seems to make the rules of order to suit himself.

**Answer:** May we pour oil on troubled waters? Perhaps, after all, the Chairman was right, and there was a difference in the amendments.

We should like our correspondent to get hold of the little booklet on Rules and Conduct of Debate, which is advertised in this issue. If he will do that he may get the better of the Chairman, of whom he is so often falling foul; on the other hand our correspondent may find that his point of view is wrong.

On page 13 of the booklet this very question is discussed, and a distinction is properly drawn between counter amendments and direct negatives. And after all there is an important difference. We will quote what is said:—

“A Counter Amendment is that class of amendment which traverses the whole Resolution. Strictly speaking, it is an Amendment by substitution, but goes to the extent of substituting one complete proposal for another. For instance, if the Resolution reads:

“That the Secretary take out a summons against the defaulting member,”

“the following would be a Counter Amendment:

“That, failing a satisfactory explanation from the members, he shall be expelled.”

“Both the Resolution and the Amendment, it will be seen, propose to deal with the offender, but in a different way. This, in fact, is the object of all Amendments: to qualify or alter the terms of a Resolution, either in part or as a whole.

“The correct formula for the moving of the Counter Amendment, though not generally used, would be:

“To omit all after the word ‘That’ and substitute ‘failing a satisfactory explanation from the member, he shall be expelled.’

“It should be noted that a Counter Amendment must be so framed as to negative or in some other way determine the proposal embodied in the Resolution. It must substitute one complete course of action for another.

“The direct negative cannot be accepted as an Amendment. For instance, with a Resolution ‘That a Meeting be held to consider the matter,’ a suggested Amendment ‘That no meeting be held’ would be a direct negative, and therefore out of order.”

### Council Tenants and Disqualification.

**Question:** I shall be pleased if you can give me some advice on the following. “Would a person who is likely to become a candidate for a Borough Election be debarred, if he wins a prize offered by the City Council for the best laid-out garden? He is a tenant of a council house, and perhaps this would disqualify. Do you think it advisable to enter such a competition in case the law is not clear upon the matter?”

**Answer:** Our friend need have no fear that tenancy of a council house disqualifies for election. The matter is dealt with by Section 17 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, whereby it is laid down that occupation of a council house is not a disqualification for membership of a Council.

In regard to the question of entering a garden competition, we are of the opinion that neither an entry nor a success in such a competition could rightly be interpreted as a contract within the meaning of Section 12 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. Alternatively, we are of the opinion that as the tenancy of a house is expressly stated not to be a disqualification any supplementary and ordinary contracts implied by a tenancy would not disqualify, such, for instance, as an undertaking by the tenant to redecorate the council house if material were supplied, which undertaking would, after all, be in the nature of a contract. We think a garden competition would be covered by the protection afforded by the tenancy, apart altogether from the relation of the matter to the section of the M.C.A. we have quoted.

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# Local Government Act, 1933

Our readers will recollect that last month we pointed to the many minor changes brought about by the above Act, some of which we enumerated. We deal with another change, i.e. the extension of free use of schoolrooms to Local Government Elections, elsewhere in this issue.

In continuation of our promise to deal with this Act in greater detail in future issues we give below Sections 57 and 59 of the Act, which deal with qualifications and disqualifications.

Our readers will recollect that the Act comes into force on the 1st June and that changes have been made in the "disqualifications," particularly those relating to contract with the Council.

The Act applies to County Councils, Borough Councils, Urban and Rural District Councils and Parish Councils, but not to London (except in part), the Metropolitan Borough Councils, or to Scotland.

The elections being held this spring are, of course, not affected by these changes.

## Clause 57.

"A person shall, unless disqualified by virtue of this Act or any other enactment, be qualified to be elected and to be a member of a local authority if he is of full age and a British subject, and—

- (a) he is a local government elector for the area of the local authority; or
- (b) he owns freehold or leasehold land within the area of the local authority; or
- (c) he has during the whole of the twelve months preceding the day of election resided in the area of the local authority; or
- (d) in the case of a member of a parish council, he has either during the whole of the twelve months preceding the day of election resided either in the parish or within three miles thereof.

## Clause 59.

(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person shall be disqualified for being elected or being a member of a local authority if he—

- (a) holds any paid office or other place of profit (other than that of mayor, chairman or sheriff) in

the gift or disposal of the local authority or of any committee thereof; or

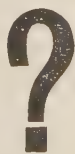
- (b) is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt, or made a composition or arrangement with his creditors; or
- (c) has within twelve months before the day of election or since his election received poor relief; or
- (d) has within five years before the day of election or since his election been surcharged to an amount exceeding five hundred pounds by a district auditor; or
- (e) has within five years before the day of election or since his election been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and ordered to be imprisoned for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine; or
- (f) is disqualified for being elected or for being a member of that authority under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices; or
- (g) in the case of the council of a borough, is an elective auditor of the borough; or

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- (h) in the case of the council of a county or county borough, is a paid officer engaged in the administration of the laws relating to the relief of the poor, or having been such a paid officer, has been dismissed from his office within five years before the day of election under the provisions of any enactment relating to the relief of the poor:

Provided that—

(i) a person shall not be disqualified for being elected or being a member of a county council by reason only of his holding the office of county returning officer for that county, unless he has, directly or indirectly, by himself or his partner, received any profit or remuneration in respect of that office;

(ii) the disqualification attaching to a person by reason of his having been adjudged bankrupt shall cease—

(a) if the bankruptcy is annulled either on the ground that he ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt, or that his debts have been paid in full, on the date of the annulment; or

(b) if he is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without any misconduct on his part, on the date of his discharge; or

(c) in any other case, on the expiration of five years from the date of his discharge;

(iii) the disqualification attaching to a person by reason of his having made a composition or arrangement with his creditors shall cease—

(a) if he pays his debts in full, on the date on which the payment is completed; or

(b) in any other case, on the expiration of five years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition or arrangement was fulfilled;

(iv) a person shall not be deemed to have received poor relief within the meaning of the paragraph (c) of this subsection by reason only that he, or a member of his family, has received medical or surgical treatment, or been an inmate of an institution for the purpose of receiving

such treatment, or received relief which could have been granted under the Blind Persons Act, 1920;

(v) for the purposes of paragraphs (d) and (e) of this subsection, the ordinary date on which the period allowed for making an appeal or application with respect to the surcharge or conviction expires or, if such an appeal or application is made, the date on which the appeal or application is finally disposed of or abandoned or fails by reason of the non-prosecution thereof, shall be deemed to be the date of the surcharge or conviction, as the case may be.

(2) A paid officer of a local authority who is employed under the direction of a committee or sub-committee of the authority, any member of which is appointed on the nomination of some other local authority, shall be disqualified for being elected or being a member of that other local authority.

(3) Teachers in a school maintained but not provided by a local education authority shall be in the same position as respects disqualification for office as members of the authority as teachers in a school provided by the authority.

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## A LITTLE LAW FOR THE SPRING ELECTIONS.

*(Our readers are reminded that the following notes are applicable only to the forthcoming elections. The Local Government Act, 1933, comes into force on the 1st June and certain changes are made therein.)*

### COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

Nomination papers must be delivered by the candidate, or his proposer or seconder, at least five days before the day of election, and before 5 o'clock of the last day—Sundays count. A proposer and seconder and eight assentors are required to sign these nomination papers.

No elector must sign more than one nomination paper, except in London where, however, no more must be signed than the number of Councillors to be elected for the electoral division.

Each candidate may, in writing, appoint a person as candidate's representative to attend at nominations and at objections. The appointment must be delivered to the R.O. before nominations close and must be in writing.

Objections are held on the day following nominations. Objections must be in writing, and only a candidate, or his representative are entitled to object.

Withdrawals must be in the hands of the R.O. prior to the time fixed for objections, i.e., between two and four o'clock on the day following nominations.

Election agents, as such, are not recognised by law in the same way as at Parliamentary elections. An agent is, however, ordinarily appointed to conduct the election and in some cases he has a partial recognition by the R.O.

The hours of polling are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.—no extension is permissible.

An elector can vote once only, and in only one electoral division of the county.

Polling (personation) agents may be appointed, one to each Polling Station. It is advisable to give one

clear day's notice, before polling day, to the R.O. of the appointment of Polling Agents.

The R.O. will notify the number of Counting Agents he proposes to allow at the count. Names and addresses of such agents must be sent to the R.O. one clear day at least before the opening of the poll.

Polling and Counting Agents must be sworn in to secrecy before the opening of the poll. Different arrangements prevail in different parts of the country as to swearing in. Where swearing in is done independently of the R.O., the agents should carry with them their declarations in case of challenge.

A candidate, as such, has no right of entry to the count. Frequently candidates are admitted by courtesy, but the precaution should be taken to swear the candidate in as a counting agent.

The candidate may act in the place of any of his agents, i.e., either counting or polling agents, but he has no general right of entry to Polling Stations, though Local Government candidates' visits to Polling Stations are rarely challenged.

The number of Committee Rooms which may be hired and Clerks and Messengers who may be employed is limited. In Labour contests, however, the number is rarely likely to be exceeded.

No meetings, public or committee meetings, may be held on premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor, or on which food or drink is ordinarily sold for consumption on the premises.

These premises are also prohibited as Committee Rooms. There is no exception for political clubs, though rooms having a separate entrance and no direct communication with the prohibited parts may be used.

Other corrupt and illegal practices generally follow the lines of Parliamentary elections, and are exactly the same as for Municipal Elections.

No candidate has the right to demand a recount.

A return of election expenses must be sent in to the R.O. within twenty-eight days, together with the statutory declaration regarding same, but no form of return is provided by statute.

### URBAN AND RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

The nomination forms provided in these elections do not require assentors. Signature of proposer and seconder is sufficient.

Nomination papers may be "sent," i.e., either delivered, or posted, to the R.O., but they must be received within the time prescribed, i.e., before 12 o'clock on the closing date for nominations.

No person may sign more nomination papers than the number of candidates to be elected for his ward, or his council where no wards exist.

There are no proceedings before the returning officer as to nominations or objections, and no candidate's representative is to be appointed, and no objections may be made.

The R.O. sends out an official notice notifying candidates whether their nomination is valid or invalid.

Withdrawals may take place within five days of nominations.

An elector may not vote in more than one ward or parish of the same council.

Election agents, as understood in Parliamentary Elections, are not recognised. It is, however, common practice to appoint one person to conduct the election or elections.

Peculiar provisions prevail as to the appointment of polling agents. Where there are less than twenty candidates the maximum is three per Polling Station. Over twenty candidates, the maximum is four per Polling Station.

It seems, therefore, that some agreement amongst all the candidates is essential if polling agents are to act, and an unseemly scramble avoided.

The appointment of polling agents

must be in writing, and delivered at the R.O.'s office not less than two clear days before the opening of the poll. No candidate can appoint more than one polling agent per polling station.

Every candidate may nominate an agent to attend the counting of the votes; occasionally more are permitted. The name of the counting agent must be sent to the R.O. one clear day at least before the opening of the poll.

Polling agents and counting agents must, of course, be sworn to secrecy. Candidates, as such have no right of entry to polling stations or the count.

The number of clerks and messengers to be employed is limited, but the number is rarely exceeded by Labour candidates.

The number of Committee Rooms is also limited, but one at any rate may be hired in each district or ward, and there is no limit to the number of Committee Rooms lent gratis.

Licensed premises, or premises on which food or drink is ordinarily sold for consumption on the premises, are prohibited, either for public or committee meetings, or for use as Committee Rooms.

An exception is made in Rural Districts where *public meetings* may be held on the above-named premises.

Where rooms on prohibited premises have a separate entrance and no direct communication with the prohibited parts, they may be used.

The provisions as to the poll and the count is similar in all respects to that for other elections, with which our readers are familiar.

There is no statutory provision enabling the poll to be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The hours are fixed by the County Council and are considerably shorter than the above in many places.

There is no return of expenses to be made by the candidates at these elections, but corrupt and illegal practices must be avoided.



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# Hints on Organisation for County Council Elections.

(Issued by The Labour Party.)

## GENERAL.

A challenging clear-cut policy against reaction must be the keynote of local electioneering by Labour Parties. If the opposition makes a noise about the introduction of party politics into Local Elections, count it as a tribute to the virility of Labour—Conservative politics are there all the time.

Where an electoral area is covered by one or two Labour Parties, joint meetings of executives, or, in cases, of the representatives of the executives, must be convened for the selection of candidates, the tabling of policy and the arrangements for the contest.

In considering the arrangements for a C.C. Campaign, it can generally be assumed that eight days public canvassing and electioneering will more than coincide with active public interest, the prior time should therefore be devoted to definite preparation for the campaign. The candidate will be well advised to call on electors in this prior period and make himself known.

A public meeting which is timed to secure Press publicity at a convenient time will also be a good preliminary in starting comment and interest. A correspondence on C.C. matters in the local Press would also be advantageous. A consultation of local speakers with the candidate and a C.C. Councillor should be fixed so that they can talk over points which ought to be made in the election.

## ELECTION CLERK.

There is no statutory office of Election Agent for local elections as is the case in Parliamentary Elections. It is, however, the custom to appoint an Election Clerk to be responsible for the conduct of the Election. It is not wise for a candidate to undertake the duties.

## FIRST DUTIES.

(1) Get photo block of the Candidate made for the address and a small one for varied use. (2) Attend to the preparation and printing of Candidate's Address and any special leaflets. (3) Start addressing en-

velopes. Choose a size for easy folding of the Address. (4) Secure copies of the Register for the district. (5) Prepare and complete two or three Nomination Papers. (Check the papers carefully.) (6) Issue Collecting Cards for money.

## FOLLOW ON DUTIES.

(1) Book Committee Rooms. (2) Arrange for Meetings. (3) Prepare Poll Cards. (4) Draft and order Posters and Leaflets. (5) Arrange for early delivery of Nomination Papers to R.O. (See below.) (6) Meet Election Workers. (7) Distribute Addresses and Poll Cards to Voters. (8) Map out Candidate's Visitation of Electors. (9) Organise Canvass of Electors. (10) Organise Mass Canvassing and Street Meetings. (11) Appoint Personation and Counting Agents. (12) Prepare for Polling Day Organisation: Cars, Messengers, Checkers, Helpers for fetching up, material for Committee Rooms.

## ENVELOPE ADDRESSING.

The organisation of this work must be precise and orderly or confusion will arise. Someone must be in definite charge of the work. Record Sheets must be prepared beforehand, and the Register, which is split up into sheets for the writers, should be first boldly numbered with coloured crayon, and a different colour should be used for each polling district.

For home writers, bundles of 200—500 envelopes and pages of the Register should be prepared and an accurate check kept of this outside work so that no duplication of effort occurs. As well as the name and address of the elector, the Poll letter and number should be put on the envelope. Give clear instructions to writers as to the *Local Government* electors only being addressed.

## ENVELOPE FILLING.

The folding and filling arrangements must be orderly. Someone must keep an eye on the supplies for the tables or homefillers. The completed lots must be tied up in suitable bundles for delivery.

If Poll Cards are used, the inser-



tion of these must be a separate and special job. The appropriate card must be put in the same numbered envelope and frequent checking must be kept up through the task. Wretched confusion has arisen in elections through mistakes over Poll Cards.

### POLL CARDS.

Prepare copy early for printer. The cards can be printed immediately if the Labour Candidate's name only is indicated. If all candidates' names are desired then final printing must be left until after nomination.

"POLL CARDS" ON ELECTION ADDRESS. Very often this arrangement is adopted as an economy of expense and work. A simple form of words in the appropriate part of the card is:

Look for the Labour Candidate's name, Goodman, in the Ballot Paper and kindly put a X opposite that name, thus:

GOODMAN	X
---------	---

The numbers can be written in.

### MEETINGS.

Indoor meetings should be carefully organised and well advertised. Two effects have to be considered in election meetings. (1) The date must be fixed in relation to getting adequate Press reports. (2) The general psychological effect in creating interest.

*Personal canvassing with leaflets should be part of the organisation of a meeting.* It cannot be expected that leaflets convening a meeting will of themselves bring adequate attendance in the case of a C.C. election. Interest must be aroused. Too many local election meetings are thinly attended. Display a poster at the entrance to the hall beforehand.

### COMMITTEE ROOMS.

No Committee Rooms may be fixed on licensed premises, or where food and drink is ordinarily sold for consumption on the premises unless the premises have a separate entrance and no direct communication with the other part. Endeavour to secure a Committee Room near to each polling station, especially for polling day itself. The outside and inside of Committee Rooms should be made bright and orderly. An attractive display of posters and bills should be arranged for, if possible.

### POSTERS, WINDOW CARDS, LEAFLETS.

Copy for these should be prepared with care. Do not crowd too much matter into the space. When you have prepared a draft, revise it and eliminate useless words and phrases.

### CANVASS.

This is the most essential and important work of the election. The election clerk must know where his Labour supporters are, so that on election day they can be polled.

If 1,200 votes are needed for a win then obviously the task is set. An attempt must be made to secure about 1,800 promises. Then the workers can concentrate on these promises on polling day.

Talk plainly to the election workers. Tell them they have simply to go in pairs to houses and hand in a leaflet and invite the people to read the candidate's address or come to his meetings. This, coupled with a remark that it is hoped the people will give support to Labour, will produce an indication of sentiments of the voter that will enable the canvass card to be marked. Of course, canvassers will make some errors, but they will collect a substantial record of "favourables," which makes the task for polling day surer and potent for mobilising the best available vote, which may mean victory. If this canvass is not done, then everybody in the election is merely working blindly at the electorate and hoping for the best, which does not usually come.

If canvass cards are not available, paste the pages of the register on cards. These can be ordered, cut to size, from a printer. Should there have been previous canvasses of the district, there ought to be a concentration on previous Labour supporters.

### MASS CANVASS OR STREET MEETINGS.

Mass canvassing is really an intimate form of street meeting. It is appropriate and effective in some districts, creating interest and building up the vote. A group of helpers go into a street and call at the houses and invite the women to come to their doors to hear the candidate or a speaker. Ringing a handbell is useful in arousing attention.

The candidate or speaker, in a very few words, reminds the people of the date of the election, and asks them to vote for Labour. Invariably, the

women come to the doors or listen behind the windows. Meanwhile, leaflets are distributed. Mass canvassing in the evening has been tried and found useful. People listen behind the curtains, and the reminder of the election and the date stimulates interest and talk about Labour.

#### PERSONAL VISITATION BY THE CANDIDATE.

Some candidates have won elections on their personal visits. A candidate with a friend or friends can call at a considerable number of houses in the course of an hour or two per day. Just a greeting and a request to read his address or come to his meeting suffices to give a pleasant impression, gets Labour and the election talked about and, what is important, induces more people to vote for Labour. Let it be said, all candidates ought to take the trouble to call on electors.

#### POLLING DAY.

Before polling day the Committee Room Clerk should have got all "favourables" canvass cards in street

order in boxes. If a register has been used for canvassing, all the favourables should have been entered on small cards with polling number; this makes a simple and most effective system for polling day and does away with wall sheets. In either case there are the cards for supporters. As the runners bring information as to the polling, the polled "favourables" are withdrawn from the boxes and put aside. Every effort must be made to poll all these supporters, and helpers will be given cards to "knock up" during the day.

In the evening all helpers will be asked to use every pressure to get out the remaining "favourables." *It is by this polling day system that a Labour vote is fully mobilised for a candidate.* If there is no such system the helpers are rushing hither and thither, and much of their toil is of small avail when they don't know where the actual favourables are.

The Committee Room Clerk and his first rota of helpers must be in attendance early. The checkers must be at the polling stations and messengers ready.

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